

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 1-7, 20-27, 28, and 30 are allowed and 15, 16, and 18 allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1-7, 14, 16-28, and 30 remain pending in the instant application. Claims 14, 17, and 19 presently stand rejected. Claims 14 and 16 are amended herein. Claim 15 is hereby cancelled without prejudice. Entry of this amendment and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 14, 17, and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Evoy et al. (US 5,958,020).

Amended independent claim 14 now includes the subject matter of claim 15 deemed allowable by the Examiner in both of the previous Office Actions issued by the Examiner. Dependent claims 17 and 19 are novel over Evoy for at least the same reason as amended independent claim 14, in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the instant § 102(b) rejections for claims 14, 17, and 19 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants believe the applicable rejections have been overcome and all claims remaining in the application are presently in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned representative at (206) 292-8600 if the Examiner believes that an interview might be useful for any reason.

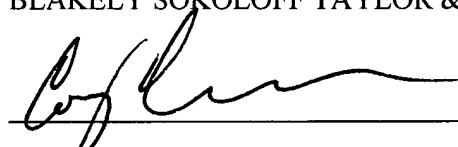
CHARGE DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

It is not believed that extensions of time are required beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, if additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a). Any fees required therefore are hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 02-2666. Please credit any overpayment to the same deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY SOKOLOFF TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Date: Jan. 3, 2005

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cory G. Claassen', is written over a horizontal line.

Cory G. Claassen

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